

Learning and Development Policy

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1. Purpose

The capability, capacity and competence of our people is vital to the delivery of services and the sustainability of our organisation. As such we will take a planned and strategic approach to the development of an organisation wide annual training plan that captures the learning and development that is consistent with:

- Council's current and future skill requirements;
- Council's size and structure; and
- Councils available budget.

Decisions relating to allocation of learning and development opportunities, including study assistance, will be based on:

1. Legislative requirements;
2. Strategic and operational needs of Council;
3. Budget and equity considerations;
4. Individual position requirements;
5. Succession and performance development planning; and
6. Individual aptitudes and capabilities.

The provision of learning and development opportunities is seen as a mutual obligation whereby both CDSC and the individual are responsible for contributing towards the achievement of outcomes.

2. Commencement

- 2.1 This procedure will commence from **25 October 2023**. It replaces all other procedures relating to the CDSC learning and development processes (written or not).

3. Application

- 3.1 This procedure applies to all new employees across CDSC and does not form part of any an employee's contract of employment.
- 3.2 Where this procedure is inconsistent with an employee's contract of employment, or engagement, or any relevant industrial instrument, the contract will prevail over this procedure to the extent of any inconsistency.
- 3.3 This procedure should be read in conjunction with the relevant provisions in the Award and industrial legislation, as amended from time to time.
- 3.4 The Leadership Team will be responsible for ensuring this policy is adhered to.

4. Definitions

Leader / Leadership - Includes all manager/supervisor positions within CDSC irrespective of their actual title (e.g. Director, Manager, Team Leader, Co-ordinator, Supervisor, Ganger, etc).

Elective Study – shall refer to study to be undertaken in the gaining of formal qualifications

Essential Study - shall refer to study/qualification that is a mandatory/essential requirement of the position (eg the position is not able to function without such study/qualification)

Assistance – shall mean either paid time off and/or financial assistance

Training and Conferences – shall mean attendance at adhoc courses and conferences to update knowledge, skills and licences required for the position.

5. Learning and Development Categories

Learning and development is generally categorised as **Compulsory** or **Elective** with the definitions being as follows:

COMPULSORY	
Legislative Requirement	Accreditations, licences, qualifications required by legislation for certain roles or work areas.
Apprenticeship, Traineeship and Cadetships	Qualifications linked to a training contract or cadetship agreement generally requiring both on and off the job development.
Organisational Requirement / Employee Development	<p>Accreditations, licences, qualifications identified by management as an organisational requirement for certain roles or work areas.</p> <p>This may also include succession planning or multi skilling to provide relief in other work areas, specialised training to assist with the implementation of new technology or work practices, or specific training for employees who participate on staff Committees.</p>
Compulsory Professional Development (CPD)	Where there is a requirement to undertake continued professional development associated with CDSC required accreditation the organisation will meet expenses towards approved courses and/or membership costs. For example, where the accreditation is a requirement of the role (eg unable to undertake the duties without the accreditation).

ELECTIVE	
Study Assistance	<p>Support for employees who request support to undertake tertiary level qualifications e.g. Diploma, Degree. Support will only be provided for qualifications that have a direct link to CDSC's objectives and the employees work area.</p> <p>The study is not critical to the employee undertaking their role.</p>

6. Assistance Provided

6.1 Compulsory Learning and Development *(includes Essential Study Assistance)*

Where an employee is **required** by Council to undertake training in accordance with CDSC's training plan, to meet a legislative requirement, or is part of an employee's duties as outlined in their position description, it is considered compulsory training and will be supported in accordance with the Local Government (State) Award as follows:

Compulsory Learning and Development – Training/Conference/Course/Workshop	
Course Fee	100% of course fee
Resources/Texts	100% of cost of compulsory texts / resources
Travel – Payment for Time	Travel during working hours is paid as ordinary time. Travel outside of normal working hours can be accrued as Time of in Lieu (TOIL). Every effort will be made to schedule activities within working hours or within a reasonable travel distance.
Course Time	All hours associated with the learning and development program will be paid as ordinary time and are to be detailed on the employee's timesheet.
Leave for Essential Study	For tertiary level courses with a significant component of course work, assessments and/or examinations CDSC will grant up to 2 days per year of Study Leave which will not be deducted from the employee's personal leave balances. The Study Leave will not accrue each year.
Travel Mode	<p>The responsible leader will make the decision on the most appropriate travel / accommodation arrangements, in consultation with the employee, based on cost effectiveness, safety and practicality for the employee.</p> <p>If car travel is the most suitable option, a Council vehicle will be provided where possible.</p> <p>If an employee requests to take their own vehicle a reimbursement in accordance with the Award shall be made for the use of their private vehicle, excluding any reimbursement for use of the vehicle for private purposes during or on either side of the trip. Details of the travel and mileage are to be included on the employee's timesheet against the days travelled.</p> <p>Where alternative modes of travel are approved e.g. plane travel, CDSC will pay the cost of economy/standard fare only.</p>
Accommodation	100% of accommodation costs where an overnight stay is required or approved. Any upgrade to the accommodation arranged by Council, or additional person charges are to be paid by the employee.

<p>Meals</p>	<p>Where overnight stay is approved the meal allowance will be as outlined in Attachment A.</p> <p>Where the training activity provides meals in the course costs then the meal allowance will be adjusted accordingly.</p> <p>CDSC will not pay or reimburse employees for any alcohol charges incurred.</p> <p>Every endeavour will be made to book training related accommodation in venues that provide a charge back for meals up to the value outlined in Attachment A.</p> <p>Where charge back for meals is not an option, Council will raise a Purchase Order for a venue close to the accommodation and training up to the value outlined in Attachment A.</p> <p>Any amount above the meal allowance limits will be the responsibility of the employee.</p>
<p>Continuing Professional Development (CPD)</p>	<p>In accordance with Clause 31(ii) of the Award where an employee is required to either maintain or obtain professional qualifications and whose positions are in Band 3 and Band 4 of the Award, they shall have access to CPD that is consistent with the training plan of the position as follows:</p> <p>10 hours per annum, or Applicable legislated CPD requirement (whichever is the greater)</p>

Where an employee commences in a position, and they do not hold the **essential** qualification/s for that position, they will be expected to undertake the training required to gain that qualification as part of a development plan negotiated (referred to as Essential Study) at the time of offer of employment with the details being documented in the employment contract. Such training will be considered a condition of the offer of employment and therefore must be obtained to continue with their employment. This applies only to qualifications that are listed as essential criteria for the position.

6.2 Elective Learning and Development / Study Assistance (non-essential)

CDSC recognises the value of ongoing employee development to build the capability and capacity of our people and prepare our staff to be *opportunity ready*. Our community also benefits greatly from successful career enhancement outcomes because a sustainable, empowered and well developed workforce is more effective in meeting CDSC's current and future needs.

The Award states that CDSC *may* grant assistance to an employee undertaking a course where it is consistent with the organisation's training plan, however it is not a requirement of the position or organisation, through providing leave with pay or leave without pay to attend course requirements provided that the employee gives reasonable notice of such requirements.

In recognition of the mutual obligation between the employee and CDSC to demonstrate equal responsibility for identifying and meeting elective training needs for the benefits of both parties CDSC will provide the following support for approved elective training:

Elective Learning and Development – Training/Conference/Course/Workshop (excluding study)	
Course Fee	100% of the fee where the short course/training/conference will benefit council
Course Travel	Travel during ordinary hours is paid as working time. Travel outside of normal working hours can be accrued as Time of in Lieu (TOIL). Every effort will be made to schedule activities within working hours or within a reasonable travel distance.
Course Time	All hours associated with the learning and development program will be paid as ordinary time and are to be detailed on the employee's timesheet.
Accommodation	<p>The responsible leader will make the decision on the most appropriate travel / accommodation arrangements, in consultation with the employee, based on cost effectiveness, safety and practicality for the employee.</p> <p>If car travel is the most suitable option, a Council vehicle will be provided where possible.</p> <p>If an employee requests to take their own vehicle a reimbursement in accordance with the Award shall be made for the use of their private vehicle, excluding any reimbursement for use of the vehicle for private purposes during or on either side of the trip. Details of the travel and mileage are to be included on the employee's timesheet against the days travelled.</p> <p>Where alternative modes of travel are approved e.g. plane travel, CDSC will pay the cost of economy/standard fare only.</p>
Meals	<p>Where overnight stay is approved the meal allowance will be as outlined in Attachment A.</p> <p>Where the training activity provides meals in the course costs then the meal allowance will be adjusted accordingly.</p> <p>CDSC will not pay or reimburse employees for any alcohol charges incurred.</p> <p>Every endeavour will be made to book training related accommodation in venues that provide a charge back for meals up to the value outlined in Attachment A.</p> <p>Where charge back for meals is not an option, Council will raise a Purchase Order for a venue close to the accommodation and training up to the value outlined in Attachment A.</p> <p>Any amount above the meal allowance limits will be the responsibility of the employee.</p>

Learning and Development – Study (non-essential)	
Study Fee	50% of course fees with a \$5,000 maximum per year. The employee will be required to reimburse Council for amounts paid towards failed subjects.
Study Resources/Texts	Nil
Study Travel	Nil
Study Time /Leave	The employee will be required to apply for annual leave to attend training/course requirements where these are to be undertaken during ordinary working hours. One day paid Study Leave will be granted to attend examinations this will be classified as ‘Special Leave’ for payroll purposes. Study Leave will not accrue each year.
Meals and Accommodation	Nil

An employee and their leader may put forward an alternative arrangement for elective training assistance where the total overall cost to the organisation does not increase as a result.

7. Training Plan and Budget

A training plan will be prepared annually by the HR Officer based on a comprehensive training needs analysis. This will include an assessment of corporate and operational requirements, information provided by each leader regarding their training requirements, information from employee appraisals relating to areas of development, as well as data in the corporate database relating to renewals.

The plan will outline the planned training activities to be funded and undertaken for the following 12-month period (financial year period), and will take into account corporate, departmental and individual training needs.

The HR Officer will work with the Directors and Managers to establish a budget each financial year to fund the training plan for the upcoming year based on the information provided through the annual staff review process and will include funds for training requirements that may arise during the year e.g. new staff, changes in legislation or operational requirements.

The Executive Management Team will have final approval of the training budget and plan annually. Expenditure against the Learning and Development budget will be managed by the HR Officer in accordance with the approved training plan and the conditions of this procedure.

7. Repayment of Study Fees on Leaving Central Darling Shire Council

Employees (excluding Apprentices and Trainees) who voluntarily leave or have their employment terminated by council will be required to refund their essential and/or non-essential study fees as follows:

- 100% of fees paid by CDSC within 12 months of the last reimbursement
- 80% of fees paid by CDSC within 2 years of the last reimbursement
- 50% of fees paid by CDSC within 3 years of the last reimbursement.

This requirement recognises the significant investment from Council to support the employee's further education.

8. Records

All documents associated with the administering of the learning and development activities will be retained in Council's document management system.

9. Legislation

Local Government (State) Award

Local Government (State) Award

Industrial Relations Act 1996 (Cth)

Work Health and Safety Act 2011

NSW Industrial Relations Act 1996

Apprenticeship and Traineeship Act 2001 (Cth)

10. Related Documents

Model Code of Conduct

Respectful Workplace Behaviours Policy

Salary System Progression Procedure

Annual Staff Assessment Procedure

Leave Management Procedure

Workplace Grievances and/or Incident Procedure

11. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be monitored and reviewed by the HR Officer to ensure compliance through regular reporting to the Management Executive Group. Once endorsed by Council, it remains in force until it is reviewed by HR Officer or when legislation changes. It is to be reviewed approximately every two (2) years to ensure that it meets business requirements, or sooner if the General Manager determines appropriate.

Meal Allowances

The amounts below are the maximum allowance for employees who attend compulsory learning and development activities, or elective course/training/workshops/conferences.

Where a meal is provided by the employer or the training provider, the employee is unable to claim the allowance.

Metropolitan / Capital Cities

Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner
\$32.10	\$36.10	\$61.50

Country / Regional Centres

Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner
\$28.75	\$32.80	\$56.60

Council will not approve payment of meal allowances in advance.

In addition, any amount above the meal allowance limits will be the responsibility of the employee.